

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 H-02

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SAM-01 /057 W

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P R 071632Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7054

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: GOVT-OPPOSITION DIALOGUE CONTINUING

REF: MADRID 6785

SUMMARY: MUCH PUBLICIZED OPPOSITION SUMMIT WAS HELD SEPT
4 WITHOUT INCIDENT. PARTICIPANTS AGREED TO FORM COORDINATING
COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL HOLD FIRST MEETING SEPT 25 IN VALENCIA,
TO STUDY OPPOSITION "ALTERNATIVE" FOR THE POLITICAL TRANSITION.
RATHER MODERATE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT SUMMIT'S CONCLUSION,
TOGETHER WITH GOVT TOLERANCE OF GET-TOGETHER AND SEPT 4
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MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ AND POPULAR SOCIALIST

PARTY CHIEF TIERNO GALVAN, APPEARS TO HAVE DAMPENED
GOVT-OPPOSITION TENSIONS, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING.
END SUMMARY.

1. NINETY-SIX REPRESENTATIVES FROM SEVEN LEFT OPPOSITION
COALITIONS (REFTEL) AND A SMATTERING OF SECOND-ECHELON
BASQUE GROUPS MET SEPT 4 IN MADRID'S EUROBUILDING HOTEL
FOR ABOUT TEN HOURS. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE JOINED BY
ELEVEN OBSERVERS, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES FROM JOSE
MARIA GIL ROBLES' POPULAR DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (FPD) AND
THE FEDERATION OF SOCIALIST PARTIES (FPS). AS REPORTED
REFTEL, THE CONSELL CATALAN, THE MAJOR BASQUE GROUPS AND
THE MADRID-BASED LIBERAL GROUPINGS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
FEDERATION WERE NOT IN ATTENDANCE.

2. RUIZ GIMENEZ'S MODERATE KEYNOTE SPEECH. CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATIC LEADER JOAQUIN RUIZ GIMENEZ, WHO PLAYED A
CENTRAL ROLE IN ORGANIZING THE MEETING, DESCRIBED THE
CURRENT SITUATION AS "GRAVE AND DIFFICULT." HE WENT ON,
HOWEVER, TO CREDIT THE SUAREZ GOVT WITH HAVING MADE POSITIVE
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRADITION,
PARTICULARLY THE POLITICAL
AMNESTY AND THE OPENING OF A DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION.
HE CONCLUDED WITH A CALL FOR OPPOSITION UNITY AS THE ONLY
BASIS FOR A "SERIOUS AND EFFECTIVE" DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVT.
THIS DIALOGUE, HE SAID, MUST BE BASED ON THE COM-
PLETE GUARANTEE OF POLITICAL AND CIVIL LIBERTIES, CARRIED
OUT IN AN OPEN AND HONEST MANNER, AND CONDUCTED WITH A
VIEW TO THE OPENING OF A CONSTITUENT PROCESS.

3. FINAL COMMUNIQUE HAMMERED OUT. IN SPITE OF REPORTEDLY
HOT DEBATE ON REGIONAL QUESTIONS AND THE DESIRE OF AT
LEAST SOME REGIONAL COALITIONS TO ADDRESS REGIONSL
GRIEVANCES -- INCLUDING THE "STRUCTURE OF THE STATE AND
GOVT" -- SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE ISSUE OF DEMOCRATIZATION,
THE PARTICIPANTS FINALLY AGREED LATE SEPT 4 ON A PUBLIC
STATEMENT. THE COMMUNIQUE, WHICH WAS DISSEMINATED IN
"THE FOUR LANGUAGES OF THE SPANISH STATE" (I.E., SPANISH,
CATALAN, BASQUE, AND GALLEGO) STATES, INTER ALIA, THAT:
-- THE GOVT, RATHER THAN ARRIVING AT "NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS,"
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IS REVERTING TO "REFORMIST POSITIONS WHICH ALREADY HAVE
FAILED";

-- THE OPPOSITION HAS DECIDED TO INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS
TO ELABORATE AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM AND TO MOBILIZE
PUBLIC OPINION IN A PEACEFUL MANNER. TO FURTHER THIS END,
THE PARTICIPANTS HAVE AGREED TO FORM A COORDINATING
COMMITTEE TO WORK TOWARD THE ARTICULATION OF A CONSENSUS

OPPOSITION PROGRAM EMBODYING A "DEMOCRATIC BREAK TO OPEN A
CONSTITUENT PERIOD" AND BASED ON: DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES;
TRADE UNION FREEDOMS; TOTAL UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY; AND
THE POLITICAL RIGHTS OF THE "NATIONALITIES AND REGIONS."
(IT WAS LATER ANNOUNCED THAT THE COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL
CONSIST OF TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH PARTICIPATING
COALITION AND WILL PREPARE THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT
"SUMMIT", WILL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING SEPT 25 IN VALENCIA.)

-- THE PARTICIPANTS DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE GOVT,
BELIEVING IT ESSENTIAL THAT SUCH A NEGOTIATION BE CARRIED
OUT IN AN OPEN MANNER BETWEEN THE GOVT AND REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE ENTIRE OPPOSITION AND WITH THE PRIOR GUARANTEE OF
FREEDOM OF ACTION FOR ALL POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION
ORGANIZATIONS. (DEMOCRATIC LEFT (ID) SEC GEN JAIME CORTEZO
TOLD EMBOFF TODAY THAT THIS "PRIOR GUARANTEE" IS AN
REITERATION OF THE OPPOSITIONS'S ADVOCACY OF FREEDOM FOR
ALL PARTIES, NOT A CONDITIONING OF PARTICIPATION ON THE
LEGALIZATION OF THE PCE.)

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4. ATMOSPHERICS. THE SUMMIT ATTRACTED CONCENTRATED MEDIA ATTENTION; MEMBERS OF THE PRESS WERE ADMITTED TO THE MORNING SESSION, BUT WERE BARRED FROM THE AFTERNOON CLOSED-DOOR AFFAIR, WHEN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MADRID-BASED GROUPS AND AT LEAST SOME OF THE REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE VENTED AND THE COMMUNIQUE WAS HAMMERED OUT. THE PRESS WAS PARTICULARLY TAKEN WITH THE PRESENCE OF PCE REPRESENTATIVE SIMON SANCHEZ MONTERO AND PCE/WORKERS COMMISSIONS LEADER MARCELINO CAMACHO. THEIR HIGHLY VISIBLE ATTENDANCE TESTIFIES TO THE GOVT'S CONSIDERABLE TOLERANCE FOR OVERT PCE ACTIVITY, AT LEAST WITHIN THE BROAD OPPOSITION CONTEXT, BUT IT IS CERTAIN TO HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY DISCOMFITING TO THE HARD-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LINE RIGHT.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUMMIT. THIS MEETING, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND SINCE THE CIVIL WAR, IS VIEWED BY THE PARTICIPANTS AS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TOWARD THE ARTICULATION OF A UNIFIED OPPOSITION "PROGRAM" FOR POLITICAL CHANGE, WHICH, IN TURN, CAN BE OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO A PEACEFUL DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION. ACCORDING TO JAIME CORTEZO, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF PLATAJUNTA MEMBERS, THE SUMMIT TURNED OUT CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN THEY HAD ANTICIPATED. IN PARTICULAR, THEY BELIEVE THAT IT ACCOMPLISHED TWO THINGS:

-- THE MADRID-BASED GROUPS WERE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE ASSEMBLED REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT THEY ARE NOT AS "CENTRALIST" AS THE REGIONAL GROUPS HAD FEARED, THEREBY ESTABLISHING CONSIDERABLE COMMON GROUND FOR NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO A UNIFIED OPPOSITION ALTERNATIVE.

-- THE PARTICIPANTS WERE ABLE TO GIVE AN EFFECTIVE, ALBEIT INTERIM, RESPONSE TO THE GOVT'S STATED DESIRE FOR GOVT-OPPOSITION DIALOGUE BY TAKING A CONCRETE STEP TOWARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON POSITION WHICH CAN EVENTUALLY LEAD TO THE DESIGNATION OF OPPOSITION REPRESENTATIVES TO "NEGOTIATE" WITH THE GOVT.

6. SUAREZ CONTINUES MEETINGS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS. EVEN BEFORE THE SUMMIT HAD CONCLUDED, PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ BEGAN A PRIVATE THREE-HOUR MEETING WITH POPULAR

SOCIALIST PARTY (PSP) CHIEF ENRIQUE TIerno GALVAN. THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE HAS NOT ISSUED A STATEMENT ON THE CHAT, BUT TIerno HAS CATEGORIZED IT AS HIGHLY POSITIVE, STATING TO THE PRESS THAT SUAREZ IS PREPARED TO HOLD TALKS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OPPOSITION WITH A VIEW TO PREPARING GOVT-OPPOSITION NEGOTIATIONS ON THE TRANSITION.

7. ANOTHER PLATAJUNTA UNITY INITIATIVE. THE PLATAJUNTA, ON SEPT 9, WILL HOST A DINNER FOR LEADERS OF MADRID-BASED POLITICAL GROUPS WHICH HAVE THUS FAR REMAINED ALOOF FROM THE COALITION. INVITED GUESTS REPORTEDLY INCLUDE LIBERALS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GARRIGUES WALKER, SATRUSTEGUI, LARROQUE AND CAMUNAS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS LASUEN AND FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ, AND LEADERS OF THE GIL ROBLES FPD AND THE FEDERATION OF SOCIALIST PARTIES (FPS).

8. COMMENT: THE RATHER MODERATE SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE, COMBINED WITH THE GOVT'S TOLERANCE OF THE SUMMIT AND SUAREZ' POSITIVE ENCOUNTER WITH TIerno GALVAN, HAS SERVED TO AMELIORATE GOVT-LEFT-OPPOSITION TENSIONS. IT IS NOW THE GOVT'S MOVE, AND ATTENTION IS TURNING TO SUAREZ' ADDRESS TO THE NATION, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN A WEEK.
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